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Im Auftrag der Wiener Sprachgesellschaft
herausgegeben von Heiner Eichner

unter Mitwirkung von
Hans Christian Luschützky,
Robert Nedoma,
Oskar E. Pfeiffer,
Klaus T. Schmidt
und Chlodwig H. Werba

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Heiner Eichner

Vorwort

Am 10.9.2010 vollendet Heiner Eichner sein 68. Lebensjahr. Die vorliegende Festschrift erscheint aus Anlass seiner Emeritierung, und zwar als Jahrgangsband der Zeitschrift *Die Sprache*, der der Jubilar seit langem verbunden ist – zuerst als Beiträger und bibliographischer Referent, später auch als Herausgeber.

Heiner Eichner – in seinem Namen sind die Radikale der urindogermanischen Wurzel **h₂nr-* ‘Mann’ zweimal enthalten – wurde 1942 im oberfränkischen Kronach geboren. Das Denkmal für einen großen Linguisten aus dieser Stadt, Johann Kaspar Zeuß, den Begründer der Keltologie, machte tiefen Eindruck auf das Kind bzw. den Jugendlichen. Heiner Eichner schloss das 1962 in München begonnene Studium im Jahre 1974 in Erlangen mit einer Dissertation bei Karl Hoffmann ab, in der er die Deklination des Hethitischen untersuchte. Anschließend war er ein Jahrzehnt lang in Regensburg tätig, zunächst als Wissenschaftlicher Assistent von Helmut Rix und dann – nachdem er sich mit einer Arbeit über indogermanische Numeralia habilitiert hatte – als Akademischer Oberrat. Ab 1984 folgten fünf Jahre eines Wanderdaseins, in denen sich der Jubilar als Privatdozent in Basel und Eichstätt sowie als Lehrbeauftragter an weiteren Universitäten verdingte. 1989 nahm er schließlich einen Ruf als Ordinarius für Allgemeine und Indogermanische Sprachwissenschaft am Institutsteil Indogermanistik des Instituts für Sprachwissenschaft an der Universität Wien an und hat hier 42 Semester lang gewirkt. Ab 1995, nach dem Tod Jochem Schindlers, oblagen ihm die Leitung des Institutsteils Indogermanistik und für einige Jahre auch die der Kommission für Iranistik (nunmehr: Institut für Iranistik) der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Mit der wohlwollenden Unterstützung des Geehrten konnte seit der Jahrtausendwende auch das Fach Keltologie an der Universität Wien kräftig gedeihen. Ferner hat er auch sogenannte kleine indogermanische Sprachen wie etwa Albanisch, Kurdisch und Zazaki im universitären Bereich gefördert.

Wie wohl nur wenige Fachvertreter ist Heiner Eichner ein Allrounder, der sich einem Großteil der indogermanischen Sprachen und Kulturen in Forschung und Lehre widmet; es gibt kaum einen Zweig des Indogermanischen, zu dem der Geehrte keine substanziellen Beiträge geliefert hat. Seit jeher gilt dem anatolischen Sprachzweig sein besonderes Augenmerk, und er konnte

auch anhand von altanatolischem (hethitischem) Sprachmaterial jenes urindogermanische Lautgesetz entdecken, das nun seinen Namen trägt; in seiner Kernformulierung – in Nachbarschaft von h_2 bleibt (das Timbre von) \bar{e} erhalten –¹ sind übrigens die Initialen des Entdeckernamens enthalten. Über den Rahmen der Indogermanistik hinaus sind es schließlich das Etruskische und die Plansprachen, die sein spezielles Interesse gefunden haben. Eine beträchtliche Anzahl seiner Arbeiten hat epigraphisch bezeugtes Sprachmaterial oder ganze epigraphische Texte zum Gegenstand. Der Bogen spannt sich dabei von altanatolischen Quellen über etruskische, lateinische und norditalische Inschriften bis hin zu den runenepigraphischen Texten der älteren germanischen Sprachen; dabei hat Heiner Eichner immer wieder auch paläographische, metrische, texttheoretische und schriftgeschichtliche Aspekte in den Vordergrund gerückt. Einen besonderen Stellenwert nimmt seit vielen Jahren die Arbeit am lykischen Inschriftenkorpus ein, bei der sich die Teilnahme an Grabungen und die enge Zusammenarbeit mit Archäolog(inn)en als überaus ertragreich erwiesen hat. Wenn sich der Jubilar über all die Jahre mit der konsequenten sprachwissenschaftlichen Analyse ‘seiner’ epigraphischen Quellen intensiv beschäftigt hat, so bildete ein zweites Themenfeld, die Erforschung der urindogermanischen Akzent- und Ablauttypen, einen Forschungsschwerpunkt vor allem in der Erlanger und Regensburger Zeit; auf den Ergebnissen dieser früheren Arbeiten basieren dann weiterführende Überlegungen zum Wechselspiel von Flexion und Wortbildung bzw. zu Kollektiv und Komprehensiv als Numeri.

Eine Würdigung wäre nicht vollständig ohne Verweis auf jene Einblicke, die „ohnehin jedem klar sind“ (O-Ton Jubilar), die man aber doch nur bei ihm in dieser Zahl und gleichsam frei Haus erhalten konnte. So ‘leben’ die An- und Einsichten des Geehrten, die seinem bemerkenswert großen fachlichen Horizont entspringen, nicht nur in seinen eigenen Publikationen – die Zahl von Referenzen des Typs „Heiner Eichner, mündlicher Hinweis“ in Arbeiten ihm Nahestehender ist Legende.

Die in thematischer wie auch methodischer Hinsicht breit gestreuten Beiträge in dieser Festschrift – aufgrund der großen Anzahl an Autor(inn)en musste es aus Umfangsgründen bei Miszellen bleiben – spiegeln die Vielfalt der Interessen und Aktivitäten Heiner Eichners wider. Die Herausgeber hoffen, dass der Jubilar in den hier versammelten Beiträgen von Weggefährten(inn)en, Kolleg(inn)en, Mitarbeiter(inne)n und Schüler(inne)n auch etliche Fa-

¹ Heiner Eichner, Die Etymologie von heth. *mehur*. In: MSS 31 (1973), 53–107: 72.

cetten seiner eigenen Forschungs- und Lehrtätigkeit wiederzufinden vermag. Alle Beteiligten wünschen Heiner Eichner von Herzen weiterhin ungebrochene Schaffenskraft und Schaffensfreude – *ad multos annos!*

Die Herausgeber danken Michael Janda, Eva Lettner und Corinna Salomon für ihre Unterstützung bei der Arbeit an dieser Festschrift.

ROBERT NEDOMA

DAVID STIFTER

Wien, im Juni 2010

Ritual Formulae and Ritual Pragmatics in Veda and Avesta

VELIZAR SADOVSKI

1. In the last decades, comparative Indo-Iranian philology and religious studies became more and more interested in the comparison of ritual texts that go beyond the usual evidence of the *Rigveda* and the *Gāthās* of Zoroāstra. We started focusing more intensely on the data of ritual poetry, the *Yāšts* and the *Yajurveda*. In particular, Indo-Iranianists began to concentrate on magical hymns of the *Atharvaveda* with the corresponding manuals on concomitant ritual actions like *Kauśika Sūtra*. Our material became especially rich after the discovery of new fragments of the *Paippalāda-Atharvaveda* and the editions of important Kāṇḍas of its Saṃhitā by Bhattacharya, Zehnder, Lubotsky and, most recently, Griffiths. What used to be considered isolated parallels, has now good chances, on an inter-textual level, to be situated in a common Indo-Iranian context.

Indeed, in some felicitous cases we have good reason to suppose that individual rituals and formulae go back to a common Indo-Iranian nucleus. A recent example is the ritual act of ‘smashing the urine of one’s enemy’, reconstructed by Skjærvø 2004 on the basis of Avestan and Rigvedic material. Even if later Zoroastrian ‘varnish’ or Vedic school divergences may have caused some innovations, tracing such rites back to an earlier common phase turns out to be a rewarding comparative task.

That is why, in this article, I shall focus on two important protective ‘military rituals’ and on the sacred texts that deal with them in *Atharvaveda* and Avesta:

1.1. They include, first, Vedic and Avestan apotropaic rites for physical protection of warriors in the battle.

1.2. The second thematic group concerns an Indo-Iranian ritual of divination, for prediction of the outcome of the combat.

As for other cases of such parallelism in Indo-Iranian, e.g. in some rituals regarding pregnancy – apotropaic, for the protection of pregnant women, and divinatory, for the prediction of the outcome of pregnancy in the *Atharvaveda* (esp. *Kauśika Sūtra*), *Yajurveda* (*Saṃhitās*, *Gṛhya Sūtras*) and Avesta

(*Vidēvdād*) –, I refer to my paper at the 14th World Sanskrit Conference at Kyōto, which is going to appear shortly in two parts (cf. Sadovski 2010).

2. Let us now concentrate on the magical practices for protecting warriors in the battle. Such customs are no doubt of central psychological value for armies. In a real combat situation, as regards the human factor, the only relevant issue is: to survive! And this means: to obtain complete physical protection against hostile missiles – arrows and spears.

2.1. Such a supernatural protection of the body can be achieved only by means of an efficient apotropaic ritual. Its magic components are: mantras, amulets and talismans. The *Atharvaveda* provides an instance of a comparable mantra against arrows, e.g. in AVŚ I,2,[1–]2/AVP I,3,[1.]3:

“‘O arrow, turn around us [without hitting us]; / make our body (turn) to stone. / As a firm one make the dangers / (and) the (ones who) hate (us, go) very far away.’”¹

We shall return to this first type of prayer for protection against arrows in 6.2.1.

We find detailed ritual descriptions in the *Kauśika Sūtra* (containing the *Atharvaveda* (Ś/P) mantra cycle called *aparājita- gaṇa*- ‘the group (of hymns and rites about how to make the army) ‘unconquered/unsurpassed/invincible’ and other mantras [s. below]), esp. Kauś. II,5[14]–7[16]: ‘Protective actions before and in battle’.

2.2. Divinatory rituals essentially consist in prognostics about future events. One of the main social domains of divination in the Veda is to predict the outcome of a military conflict. An entire chapter of *Kauśika Sūtra* deals with such predictions: In one of these ritual practices the priest nourishes the fire with grass sprinkled with *ingida*- oil and consecrated with mantras from *Atharvaveda* IV,31. The direction taken by the smoke flying in the sky indicates which of the armies will attain final victory.²

The Avesta contains two closely related ‘war rituals’, an apotropaic one (below, 3.–6.) for making the warrior invulnerable and a divinatory one (below, 7.) for predicting victory. Both rituals correspond to Indian ritual practices

¹ Cf. Zehnder 1993, 13 f. (ad AVP I,3); see also the *varia lectio* ad b: *-aśmā bhavatu nas tanūh* (Whitney / Lanman 1905, 3 [ad AVŚ I,2]). – Due to limitations of space, I am forced to omit almost all primary quotations, giving only the *loci* and their translations; more details and lit. in Sadovski 2010.

² Kauś. II,5[14],30 f.; cf. Caland 1900, 34 ff.

about which we are informed by the Atharvavedic tradition, and a better understanding of them can therefore be attained by means of textual comparison.

3. The Avestan testimony is provided by an important but rarely discussed hymn: *Yāšt* 14. It is dedicated to *Vərəθraϥna-*, traditionally rendered as ‘Power of victory’ (‘Siegeskraft’) or better, as ‘Obstruction-Smashing Force’. The first half of the hymn describes ten different appearances of *Vərəθraϥna* – as (a) a stormy wind (*vāta-*), (b) a bull, (c) a horse, (d) a male camel, (e) a boar, (f) a young man, (g) the bird *Vārə(ṇ)g/jan-*, (h) a ram, (i) a he-goat, and finally, (j) as a warrior – this is the figure, on which, then, the hymn focusses in detail. This last ‘avatara’ leads us to the thematic focus of the hymn.

Of special interest is the use of amulets and mantras in the second part of *Yāšt* 14, for it displays common features with the *Atharvaveda*. This part contains the description of three apotropaic objects (amulets), which occur in an analogous manner in Indian magic literature, too, and which are to be used by the warrior in the fight. Here, we are dealing with two related war rituals:

3.1. an apotropaic ritual: to attain invulnerability of the bodies of the warriors (st. 34–40. 57–62);

3.2. a divinatory one: to predict which of the war parties is going to gain victory (st. 42–46).

4. The first of the three amulets concerned is a stalk of *Haoma-* – the Iranian pendant of Vedic *Soma-*:

4.1. Here follow the mantra and the ritual action – *Yt.* 14,57–58 (cf. also *Hōm Yāšt* / *Y.* 9,27):

- (57) ‘We worship the *ahura*-created Obstruction-Smashing Force.
 I carry a *Haoma* (stalk) at me (as amulet) that saves from decline,
 I carry a *Haoma* (stalk) at me, an obstruction-smashing one,
 I carry the protector of good at me,
 I carry the protector of (my) body at me,
 If one pins a *Haoma* (stalk) [as an amulet],
 one escapes the bonds of the evil-thinking in the battle [...]
- (58) [...] in order that I defeat that army,
 in order that I defeat ‘down’ (completely) that army,
 in order that I beat down that army
 that moves behind/after me.’

In a kind of an ‘excursus’ shortly after this stanza, the warriors wish that *Vərəθraϥna* binds their enemies at their feet with cords, and fixes their hands behind with bonds.

4.2. The parallelism between the two types of warrior's amulets in the Avesta and the Veda could not be stronger. In Old Indian (*Kauśika Sūtra*), we find an analogous protective ritual whose task is "to terrify the enemy's armies and let them run away" (cf. Caland 1900, 33 ff., esp. 34 f.). It contains not only the Soma stalk, corresponding to the Haoma stalk of Avesta, but also two other 'body protectors' that come up next in *Yašt* 14 – the feather and the stone amulets. Let us first look at the section with the Soma stalk – Kauś. II,7[16],3 ff.:

- (3) 'He binds an amulet consisting of *Soma* stalks, (after) having sewn (it) into a piece of gazelle leather, to a warrior-king (*kṣatriya*-) around (his neck).
- (4) (With the songs *Atharvaveda* VI,67 or 98,) the king goes thrice around his army (in order to make it invincible).
- (5) [The prescription just] mentioned (3) [treats the charm that is accomplished with the (amulet)] consisting of *Soma* stalks[, which is connected (only)] with the first cited (song),
- (6) The songs *Atharvaveda* VI,103 and VI,104 are connected with (the actions of) hand-binding and foot-binding (explained above), by means of the cords.
- (7) The song VII,118 is connected with following action: The king's house-priest puts the armour on the king-warrior (*kṣatriya*-) (after having consecrated it with the song quoted).'

4.3. This striking parallelism between the two warrior rituals allows us to start looking more systematically for commonalities concerning the treatment of *Soma* stalks in Indian and *Haoma* stalks in Iranian tradition.

4.3.1. Indeed, it is not difficult to discover other important similarities in Avesta. Beside the mantra in *Yašt* 14 to the Haoma stalk, to Ama and to Vərəθrayna, we have an analogous mantra also in *Hōm Yašt* (*Yasna* 9,27): again, it is dedicated to the Haoma stalk, Ama and Vərəθrayna:

'O (stem of) *haoma*, lord of the house! lord of the village! / lord of the clan! lord of the country! / lord of the knowledge of holiness. / For Attacking Force and Obstruction-Smashing Force I call you, for my body!'

4.3.2. In consequence, the mantra to the Haoma stalk, Ama and Vərəθrayna in *Yašt* 14 exhibits the same structure as the text just quoted: it is a mantra for physical protection.

4.3.3. With these texts, we can now compare Vedic ritual mantras to the Soma stalk for bodily protection – e.g. AVŚ VII,81,3:

'O stem of *soma*, lord of fighters! / not-deficient verily art thou by name; / make me, O first-sight (*darçā*), not-deficient, / both by progeny and by riches.'

These mantras have not only identical purpose, terminology and technique of formulation, they both concern specifically Soma/Haoma in its shape of stalks.

4.4. We know also variations with stalks of (*darbha*-) grass instead of soma stalks, e.g. Kauś. II,5[14],12–13:

- (12) ‘The first song quoted (AVŚ I,2) is connected to (the ritual actions), by means of which (hostile) arrows go around (do not hit) somebody.
- (13) He (the priest) binds a bow button, a tendon, (or) a cord or stalks of grass (around the neck of the king, to whom he wishes victory).’

5. In some of these rites, the protected person uses not a Soma stalk but a feather. This brings us closer to the next part of the Avestan hymn. The second protective object for warriors in *Yašt* 14 is indeed a feather amulet! The feather concerned is one of the same giant bird *Vārə(ṇ)g/jan-* (on which cf. e.g. Kellens 1974, 318 ff.) that functions as a hypostasis of *Vərəθraγna-* in the first part of the hymn (Yt. 14,19–21). The feather amulet is depicted in stanzas 35–38 like this:

- (35) “‘You should search for a feather
of the bird *Vārəṇjin(a)-* (*Vārə[ṇ]g/jan-*) of the wide wing spread,
o Spitama Zaraθuštra.
With this feather you should touch/stroke (your) body,
with this feather you should ban the combat enemy.”
- (36) (One) attains [divine] favours,
(if one is) furnished with a bone of the strong bird
or (if) furnished with a feather of the strong bird (as an amulet).
And no (hu)man, even a rich/elevated one, (does) kill (him)
nor make him withdraw;
(as) first he attains homage,
(as) first (he attains) *x^varənah-*.
(It is) support (that)
the feather of the bird of the birds bestows with.
- (37) (Among the ones protected by the feather, then),
the lord of the dictators, the lord of the country,
does not kill a hundred – (even if being a) hero-killing one –
nor (does he) [as usual] kill a hundred at once;
(it is only) one (whom) he kills, (then) he goes forth.
- (38) All tremble in front of the (one) furnished with the feather;
so all enemies will tremble
also in front of me for (their) bodies (persons);
all the bad-thinking ones will tremble with regard to the Attacking Force and the
Obstruction-Smashing Force
(and) the thought (spiritual energy) that is situated in the body.’

5.1. What is of substantial value here is not only the presence of the feather but also the described rite of touching or stroking the body with it.

5.2. The Vedic texts show parallels in this regard, too: In the *Sautrāmaṇī* ritual,³ the warrior has to stroke his body with a big bird's feather: an eagle's feather. The common elements here are as follows:

5.2.1. By definition, the sacrificer here is 'a warrior-king (*kṣatriya*-), who desires complete victory'.

5.2.2. He 'strokes his body with an eagle's feather two times above the navel and once below it'.⁴

5.3. While Avesta remains open, giving the impression that the warrior has to stroke his whole body, to obtain total 'immunity', the specific act of 'stroking the navel' in the Vedic Sūtras corresponds to a series of ritual contacts accompanied by 'touching the navel' as a centre of vital functions – for instance, initiatory and transitory rites like rituals of marriage or pregnancy.⁵

6. The third apotropaic object is a stone amulet.

6.1. *Yašt* 14 (st. 59–60) says:

(59) "We worship the *ahura*-created Obstruction-Smashing Force.
The lord(s) son carried
the stone, the siyūric offspring (of siyūric origin?) [as amulet],
[...] it was by name 'the one who has Attacking Force', 'the one who has Obstruction-Smashing Force' [...]:

(60) In order that I obtain as great Obstruction-Smashing Force
as all the other Aryans (together),
in order that I defeat that army,
in order that I defeat 'down' (completely) that army,
in order that I beat down that army
that moves behind/after me."

6.2. This last part of the Iranian ritual, too, has good Indian parallels. They are in rituals of *Atharvaveda* connected by the common element that may be

³ Lit. in Hillebrandt 1897, 159 ff.

⁴ Significantly, *Sautrāmaṇī* is also the ritual by which the Aśvins once healed Indra – the warrior and king (*kṣatriya*-) par excellence.

⁵ With regard to rituals of pregnancy, cf. my Kyōto paper (see above, 1.2.); compare e.g. the prescriptions of *HirGṛSū* II,3,1, when a child is (being) born, to stroke the mother's body from above downwards (Gonda 1980, 71), or the ritual complex of the *garbhādhāna*-, lit. 'the placing of the embryo', described by *VaitGṛ* III,10, in which the husband 'strokes her [the future mother's] body by means of a *darbha*- stalk ('[so] that you give birth to a male child')' (Gonda 1980, 368); cf. *BaudhGṛ* II,2 and *PārGṛ* I,11,7 f. Beside the mentioned *darbha*- stalk, one can use also the *soma*- stalk for touching one's wife's body during such rituals of transition, e.g. the *pūṃsavana*-ritual that serves to secure the birth of a male child.

called ‘touching a stone before crucial events, to summon energy’. The motif of ‘body turning to stone’ before a battle or other crucial events is common in Indo-Iranian. Indian warriors, too, ‘tank up bodily protection’ from stone amulets before the beginning of battle.

6.2.1. In a parallel way to the cited Avestan prayer, the two main branches of the *Atharvaveda* – *Śaunaka* and *Paippalāda* – contain the mantra ‘for defending the body from the arrows of the enemy’. We already mentioned the *Śaunaka* version at the beginning of this paper (above, 2.1.):

“‘O arrow, turn around us [without hitting us]; / make our body (turn) to stone.’”

6.2.2. In the Vedas, ritual ‘body touch’ turns the body to stone, according to a series of initiation rites especially in the complex of *upanayana*–; see on this point the descriptions in our sources as presented e.g. by Hillebrandt (1897, 160. 161 [§ 82]) or Gonda (1980, 71: “in the marriage rite ŚG. 1,13, 12 the bride has to tread on a stone with the words ‘... like a stone be firm; tread the enemies down’; GG. 2,2,3 f. [...] HG. 1,3,14 f.”) and compare above, 5.2.

6.3. There is a series of (Atharva-)Vedic rituals corresponding to the Avestan ritual from *Yašt* 14; compare especially the apotropaic mantras: AVŚ III,1,3–5 (cf. also AVŚ III,2,5). – Also *Kauśika Sūtra*, in a chapter ‘In order not to be hit by enemy’s arrows’ (II,5[14],12. 20), provides a parallel example of stone amulets in the same context – explicitly using the same mantras (AVŚ III,1 and/or III,2!):

(12) ‘The first quoted song (AVŚ I,2) is connected to (the ritual actions), by means of which (hostile) arrows go around somebody (i.e. do not hit him).

(20) He sends twenty-one pebbles at (the enemies) [after each stanza of the song AV III,1 or according to some, III,2].’⁶

7. Finally, in *Yašt* 14 we find also a divination ritual with feathers and feathered arrows, for predicting the outcome⁷ of the conflict.

In ancient Iran and India divinatory rites are generally performed at critical moments – e.g., before marriage! – or before some important undertakings, such as crucial sacrifices and before battles. Divinatory rites were obviously applied before a real confrontation of

⁶ On the ritual of throwing pebbles before rushing onto the enemy’s armies (of elephants) see Kauś. II,5[14],5; cf. Caland 1900, 27.

⁷ On another series of (voodoo-like) charms with a feathered arrow, which one has to bore through a ceramic figure of the enemy, see Kauś. 35,28 and the related Sūtras 39,12 (cf. Caland 1900, 166 with n. 9) and 47,54.

two armies; but a second form of divination was the individual combat between two elected protagonists of the armies. Its exit was taken to predetermine the outcome and to prevent the expansion of conflict.

7.0. We can recall typological parallels of such events in the Homeric *Iliad*. The two protagonists engaged in the symbolic fight/duel are called in Greek πρόμαχοι ‘fore-fighters’. Ritual duels are well attested in the *Iliad* (e.g. II,410–432. XII): with Homer, too, we find the same significant distribution:

7.0.1. divination before combat, cf. activities of Agamemnon’s priest/predictor Kalchas and of Hektor’s, Polydamas and Helenos (e.g. II. XII, 199–229);

7.0.2. duel of two πρόμαχοι: Paris and Menelaos (II. III), Diomedes and Aeneas (II. V), Aias and Hektor (II. VII), Hektor and Achilles (II. XXII).

With regard to Veda and Avesta, an interesting parallel between two rituals of battle divination must be reported, parallels which have a good chance of having a common origin.

7.1. The Iranian ritual occurs in the same framework of *Yašt* 14, precisely after the episode about the three talismans just discussed. This is what Ahura Mazda recommends for deciding a battle (Yt. 14,43–45):

- (43) “If two armies clash together [...],
each one (being) an ordered battle line,
and the advancing ones do not advance (come through⁸)
and the defeated ones are not (totally) defeated,⁸
- (44) you should distribute four feathers [a]⁹
on the way [b], one by one (or: two by two / couple by couple) each [c];
the one of the two (parties) which first prays:
‘O well-shaped, well-grown “Attacking Force”,
ahura-created “Obstruction-Smashing Force”!’,
it is this one (party) that the ‘Obstruction-Smashing Force’ follows/joins.”
- (45) “I satisfy ‘Attacking Force’ and ‘Obstruction-Smashing Force’:
two protectors, two defenders,
two guardians.
The two [feathers] shall flutter up,
the two shall flutter to and fro,
the two shall flutter forth;
the two shall fly up,
the two shall fly to and fro,
the two shall fly forth!”

⁸ I.e., if the combat is stuck in a stalemate situation and the conflict cannot be solved in a purely military way.

⁹ Here I mark the three essential elements of the ritual with letters (details below, 7.2.).

Here we obviously have a situation in which the two armies ritually decide the outcome of the battle by using the four feathers: They are distributed one by one, in two groups of two pieces each, as can be seen in the next stanzas, and they are then thrown into the air or fly by themselves. And this is how the divination rite proceeds in detail: The formulae accompanying the action (44–45) are explicitly called a *mantra* (in 46) that should remain secret knowledge to be transmitted only from father to son.

7.2. Vedic Indians knew a ritual complex very similar to this Iranian war rite – concerning the procedure both as a whole and in its details. It is attested in *Kauśika Sūtra* II,5[14]–II,7[16], which collect the rituals of magic against hostile armies. *Kauśika Sūtra* uses a series of *Atharvaveda* hymns and unites them under the common name of *aparājita-gaṇa-* (see above, 2.1.). The hymns are partially separated from one another in the present shape of the *Śaunaka* version; in *Kauśika Sūtra* and sometimes in the corresponding passages of the *Paippalāda*, they are treated as one complex, just like *Yašt* 14 is. The elements (displayed most explicitly at Kauś. II,7[16],20 ff. II,5[14],22 ff.) can be summarized¹⁰ in the following three groups:

[a] charm with a feather(ed arrow) against enemy('s army) (Kauś. II,7[16],25 f. II,5[14],22 f.); with stalks of grass (Kauś. II,5[14],28; cf. also the grass smoke at Kauś. II,5[14],30 f.) against enemies;

[b] ritual treatment of the path which the enemies go, with spells, to force them to withdraw (Kauś. II,5[14],28 f. II,7[16],16 f. II,7[16],23 f.);

[c] 'two-by-two' appearance of warriors of two hostile armies for a symbolic decisive battle. Here we are faced with a sort of double πρόμαχοι (Kauś. II,6[15],9 f.) and with their magical-symbolical substitutes (e.g. feathered arrows: cf. Kauś. II,7[16],25 f.).

7.3. In conclusion, we have a ritual structure that we may call 'feather-and-arrow magic rite against hostile armies' with several individual components around the central nucleus. This nucleus is marked above both in 7.1. and 7.2. with the letter [a]. Both in Avesta and in the Veda one can observe the 'two-by-two' appearance of warriors of each army or of the feathers – 'two-by-two' – as their representatives: The way the feathers fly brings a symbolic solution of the battle! This component is marked above in 7.1. and 7.2. with [b]. As further components in *Kauśika Sūtra* we find the ritual with blades of grass against hostile armies. If one treats the path, on which the en-

¹⁰ For a full text of the Sūtras containing the amalgam of these war rites see Kauś. II,5–7 (Caland 1900, 27 ff. [§ 14–16]).

emy comes, with spells, one can force the enemy to withdraw. This is marked above in 7.1. and 7.2. with [c]. If we compare the ritual nuclei in the Veda and in Avesta, we can discover something additional – we can see how the sequence of magic procedures in *Yašt* 14,34 ff. preserves a much older stratum under its Mazdayasnian-Zoroastrian ‘varnish’.

8. As we have demonstrated, the intrinsic parallels between the two protective rituals (above, 3–6. 7) are obvious: We have seen entire bundles of common features which enforce this parallelism and render it more than coincidental. But what is even more important is the simultaneous appearance of all three ritual practices within the relevant sacred texts of Indian and Iranian concerning the chapter ‘protective military rites with apotropaic amulets’ – as regards Indian, in the two *Samhitās* of the *Atharvaveda* and in the principal manual on practical magic, the *Kauśika Sūtra*; as concerns Iranian, in the second part of *Yašt* 14. Thus the comparative evidence of Avestan and Vedic exhibits hidden residues of old mantras and magic actions which can enlarge our knowledge of older (Indo-Iranian) magic formulae and magic rituals in an essential way.

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